

WHEELING, W. VA.  
NEWS-REGISTER

E. 31,072  
S. 54,134

MAY 7 1961

## Politics No!

IF TOO MUCH attention is not devoted to the location and punishment of a whipping boy, the two-pronged investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency, now in the works, could produce some good results.

Certainly from the public point of view a shakeup is long overdue. For a long time it has seemed to the man in the street either that the quality of the international information brought back to Washington is of a very low order or that there has been a signal failure at the seat of government to act intelligently on sound information. But the people are more interested in improvement of performance than in the political hides of those who were responsible for what seem to have been colossal failures.

The investigations referred to present both the opportunity for constructive accomplishment and the temptation to play politics. Mr. Kennedy has set up a top-level advisory board to look into the whole subject. Its function is to "advise the President with respect to the objectives and conduct of the foreign intelligence and related activities of the United States which are required in the interests of foreign policy and national defense and security." He has ordered a collateral review of the CIA individually. Congress, on its part, appears headed for the creation of a joint committee of its own to ride herd, as it were, on the CIA. Already the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has undertaken a closed-door inquiry into the government's relations with the disastrous Cuban invasion, and will open hearings soon on a resolution calling for the creation of an intelligence watchdog committee.

Out of all of this could come either a lot of political of our listening posts. Because the apparent failure of intelligence goes back to the last administration, the temptation will be strong on one side of the political aisle to blame Mr. Eisenhower and a Republican regime for a bad situation inherited by the new administration. Because Mr. Kennedy was in full charge of affairs at the time of the Cuban episode, and because he was no stranger to national affairs as a member of the United States Senate, the temptation will be as strong on the other to say that Mr. Kennedy has failed to measure up to the responsibilities of his office and the promise of his own campaign.

None of this can help now. The truth seems to be that our intelligence is and for a long time has been inept. This, in turn, has led to some disastrous decisions which have cost us enormously in international prestige and may have threatened our security. The important thing now is not so much who as why, and what is to be done to shore up the weaknesses and prevent repetition of the blunders. It is to be hoped, then, that there is a minimum of politics and a maximum of patriotism in the approach to an intelligence overhaul.